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|  | **ExMC/2101/CD****SEPTEMBER 2024** |
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**INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION SYSTEM FOR
CERTIFICATION TO STANDARDS RELATING TO EQUIPMENT FOR USE
IN EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERES (IECEx SYSTEM)**

## Title: AU Proposal concerning Email contact details

To: Members of the IECEx Management Committee, ExMC

**Introduction**

This document contains a proposal from AU regarding the maintenance of email contact details associated with IECEx Certificate Holders and Applicants.

This proposal is to be considered during the September 2024 IECEx Management Committee meeting in Foz do Iguaçu.

The proposal may also be informed to the ExTAG meeting being held ahead of the ExMC meeting.

**IECEx Secretariat**

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3 September 2024

**Subject: Communication by email for Applicants and Manufacturers in the IECEx scheme**

Dear Members of the IECEx Testing and Assessment Group, ExTAG and IECEx Management Committee, ExMC

The Australian member body would like to raise a discussion paper containing proposals for consideration at the meetings in Brazil 2024, relating to communication by email for Applicants and Manufacturers in the IECEx scheme.

**Synopsis:**

This discussion paper examines:

1. the necessity of establishing email contact information to enable communication with Applicants and Manufacturers
2. possible methods on how to provide this information, and how to ensure it is updated.

**Summary:**

The IECEx scheme is a modern certification scheme built for the present era of having information available online and being authentic.

This allows for multiple stakeholders to obtain the authentic certificates for the equipment and services that have been certified under the IECEx 02, IECEx 03, and IECEx 05 schemes.

By perusal of the online certificates of Ex equipment under the IECEx 02 scheme, these identify the applicant and manufacturer(s), by listing the name, street address of both the applicant and manufacturers.

However, when there is a need to contact the applicant or manufacturer, the method of sending a letter to the street address is not only time consuming, this method is a ‘one-way’ type of communication where the sender is not able to reliably find out if the letter has been actually received. Sending information by registered post with a receipt of delivery is totally outdated,

Using a telephone number to communicate and discuss technical queries is not sufficient for in-depth discussions, and in any case, telephone numbers are not listed on the certificates.

*Modern communications use emails to establish communication. These lead to rapid resolution of issues, and such communication now has legal recognition too.*

With this in mind, it becomes clear that the certificates available online in the IECEx system should necessarily have the email contact addresses for applicants and manufacturers listed and kept current.

We seek a decision on the necessity of the above.

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**When do we need email contact addresses on certificates and QAR’s?**

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|  | Certification Bodies need email addresses to establish contact with Applicants and Manufacturers regarding certificates | During the certification process, the assigned technical or administrative person at the applicant and manufacturer communicate with the Certification Bodies. Emails are the primary method of contact, and email addresses are available, However, after the certificate is issued, the email addresses are often revised. In a typical 5 year period, the technical and administrative person at the applicant and manufacturer may have been promoted, changed jobs, retired, and Certification Bodies find it very difficult to re-establish communications in case the certificate information requires discussion due to any reason. This could be simple matter of the Applicant having changed, or a more complex matter of a market query that requires clarification of the content of the certificate, or a complaint that requires immediate resolution. |
|  | Certification Bodies need email addresses of Manufacturers regarding maintenance of the QAR’s | During the lifetime of the certificates, the manufacturer of Ex type certified equipment and Service Facilities undergo a three-year cycle of assessments of the manufacturer’s / service facilities Quality System.During the certification process, the assigned technical or administrative person at the manufacturer communicate with the Certification Bodies providing the QAR, and email addresses are available, However, after the QAR is issued, changes at the manufacturer due to staff changes often make the email address invalid. This issue becomes even more evident when Certification Body A has used the QAR issued by Certification Body B. If the Certification Body A finds that the QAR is not maintained in the three yearly cycle as mandated by the IECEx scheme, the Certification Body A does not have the direct ability to contact the manufacturer, as they do not have the email address of the manufacturer at all. (the email address would only be with Certification Body B on their files, which may be outdated too). |

**To assist in resolving this important issue, AU submits the proposals that:**

**Proposal 1:** The IECEx Rules and Operational Documents be revised to require that the Applicant and Manufacturer maintain a monitored business email address.

**The Rules (currently IECEx 02 Ed 8.1) revised as shown in italics:**

3.16 Applicant

a manufacturer or a person which acts on behalf of the manufacturer, *situated at a stated location or stated locations with a monitored business email address*, and who applies …

3.17 Manufacturer

an organization, situated at a stated location or stated locations, *with a monitored business email address*, that carries out ….

9,1 Application

Add a paragraph:

*The applicant and the manufacturer making the application for certification shall provide and maintain a monitored business email address. This email address will be used to establish contact for information and currency of the certificates and QAR’s*

9.11 Suspension or cancellation

Under the section “An IECEx CoC may be suspended or cancelled by the issuing ExCB if” :

add a further dot point:

* *the applicant and / or the manufacturer are not contactable at their monitored business email address submitted to the IECEx Certifying Body that has issued their IECEx certificate for 5 or more working days*

no response on the email address within 5 working days become a reason for suspension and eventual cancellation of the certificates and withdrawal of the QAR

**The Operational Document OD 209 (currently Ed 1.1) revised as shown in italics:**

4.2.2 Initiation by IECEx certification body

In the NOTE, add a further dot point:

* *There is a concern with the certificate or currency of the QAR, but the applicant / manufacturer are not responding to their declared monitored business email address*

6 Actions to be completed as part of a certificate of conformity suspension/cancellation: In dot point b), add Applicant is informed of the change in certificate status and their obligations *by communication at their provided business email address*…

**Proposal 2**: For the interim period before a more sophisticated solution is found, a simple proposal where email contact with manufacturer is concerned, the QAR Summary Sheet that is published by the IECEx CB during the 3 yearly QAR process would have a field (or in the Notes at the end of the QAR Summary) to list the business email address of the manufacturer where queries regarding their Ex assessment can be directed to.

**Proposal 3**: The IECEx create a register (similar to the IECEx OD 024 Testing Register) which is accessible publicly but updated only by IECEx member bodies with password access. This would hold the business email address of the Applicant and Manufacturers.

During the 3 yearly cycle of the QAR assessment of manufacturers, the ExCB conducting the QAR would examine the content of the register and check with the manufacturer that the information is current,

If this requires updating, the Applicant, Manufacturer should contact their IECEx certification Body who can revise the field containing the email contact address without changing the Issue number of the certificate.

**Conclusion:**

It is hoped that the above proposals are accepted by the IECEx system to solve this important issue, and make suitable changes to the Rules requiring the applicant and manufacturer to take responsibility for maintaining the business email contact information, and the IECEx online system accommodate the additional fields to hold the email contact information.

Respectfully submitted:

Sarah Wynn and Matthew Pitt

Scheme Management Coordinator and Technical Manager

Australian IECEx Member Body